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29 April 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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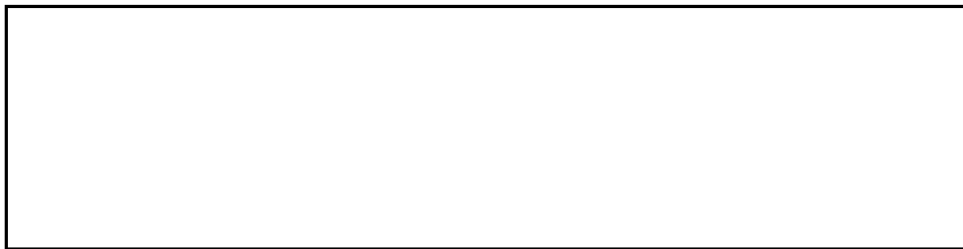
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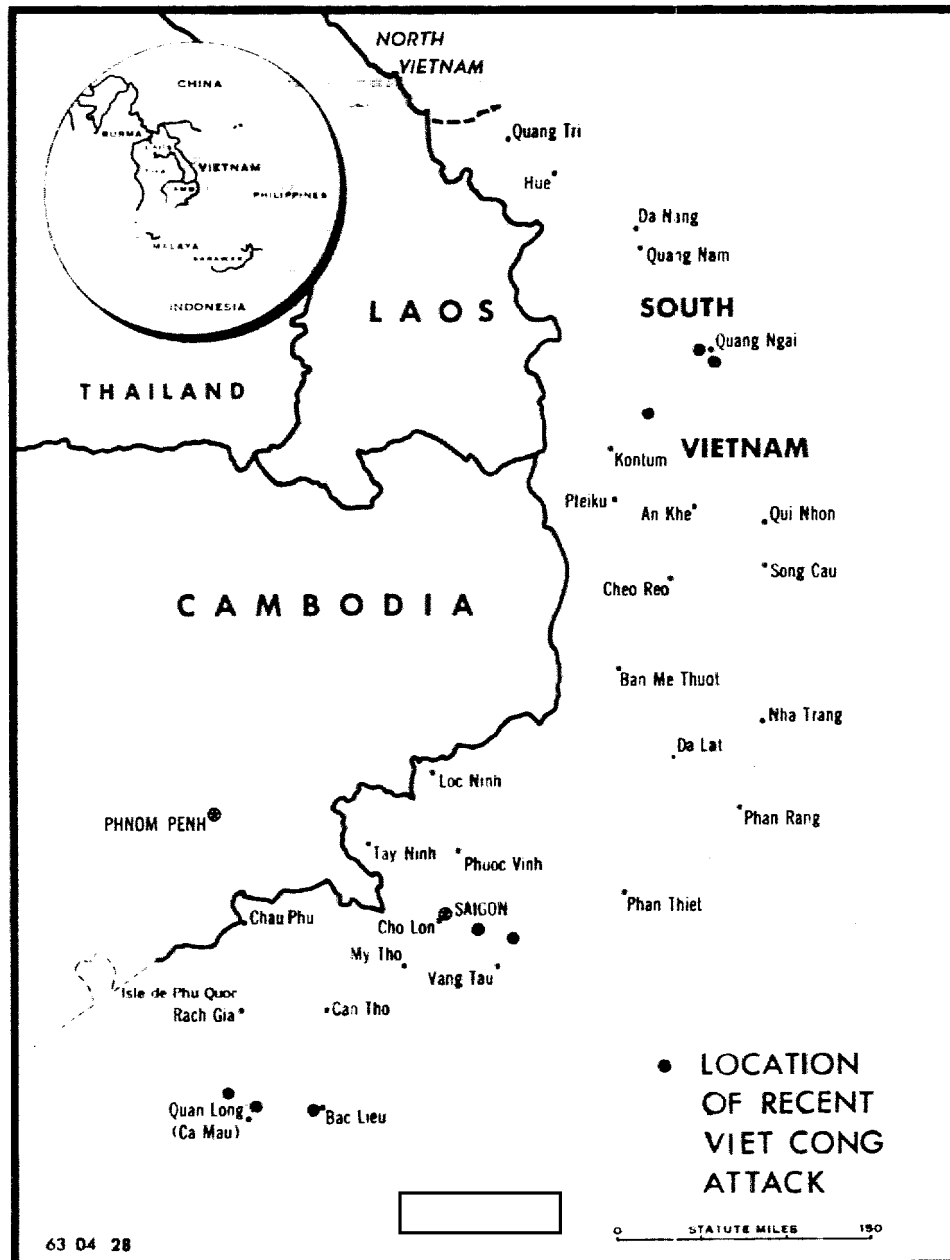
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South Vietnam: The Viet Cong have stepped up the tempo and scale of their attacks in the past two weeks.

The number of Communist attacks in the week ending 22 April, reported at 128, was the highest weekly total since last June. Included were major offensives in the northern coastal province of Quang Ngai as well as two company-size actions east of Saigon. Communist pressure has since been maintained throughout the country with larger strikes, including at least one and probably two battalion-size attacks on government posts, in the southern-most province.

In the largest single attack in several months a Communist force, estimated at two battalions, on 27 April inflicted heavy casualties on a large government unit in the central province of Kontum.

The Viet Cong offensives suggest a continued ability to mount effective, coordinated actions throughout the country. The campaign may be an effort to undercut the psychological effect of Diem's amnesty program, recently launched on the first anniversary of South Vietnam's strategic hamlet program.

While government troops reported highly successful counteraction in Quang Ngai, claiming to have inflicted nearly 400 casualties, they failed to engage the large Viet Cong concentrations in the south which apparently dispersed rapidly after attacking. [REDACTED] (Map)

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DAILY BRIEF

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Cuba-USSR: The massive Red Square welcome given Castro on 28 April is part of Moscow's all-out effort to counteract the lingering resentment he probably still harbors over Soviet actions during the missile crisis.

The presence of Minister of Economy Boti in Castro's entourage suggests that the Cuban and Soviet leaders are likely to discuss matters relating to economic assistance. Also accompanying Castro are Deputy Minister and Chief of Staff Sergio del Valle and other military aides.

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There is no evidence to support press speculation that Castro is to travel on to Communist China.

[redacted] Algeria is to be the only stop after Moscow.

The US Embassy in Algiers expects Castro to arrive there on or about 12 May, although no dates have been officially announced. Algerian Premier Ben Bella told Ambassador Porter on 26 April that it was Castro who had initiated the idea of the visit to Algeria. Castro probably will return to Cuba by the end of May. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Sweden: The first official policy statement of Foreign Minister Torsten Nilsson, made on 23 April, suggests he is unlikely to give Sweden's historic neutrality policy a more pro-Western orientation--something many observers anticipated when he took office last September.

Nilsson avoided any phraseology helpful to US positions, e. g., on disarmament, and did not say anything which might annoy Moscow. An official of the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm expressed great satisfaction with the statement, which included a strong endorsement of "peaceful coexistence," even though this was defined in terms of an "open society." Nilsson interpreted the Cuban crisis in such a way as to prove the current importance of the nuclear-free-zones plan of former Foreign Minister Uden.

The US Embassy in Stockholm comments that the most charitable explanation of the statement is the desire to pave the way for a hearty welcome for Nilsson next month in Moscow. Nilsson also apparently desired to mollify Uden's left wing of the ruling Social Democratic Party. A Swedish official said that Nilsson would act more independently later but for the time being had to nod to Uden.

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NOTES

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Turkey-Greece-Cyprus: Anti-Turkish feeling is still running high in Greece, even though Cyprus President Makarios' moderate response to last week's court ruling which nullified ethnic municipal councils on Cyprus may pave the way for a compromise solution of that problem. A major issue is Turkish delay in issuing a passport to the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Istanbul, Athenagoras, who wishes to take part in religious ceremonies in Greece. The Greeks widely suspect that this delay is politically inspired, and their emotional public discussion of it may further harden the Turkish position on all questions relating to relations with Greece.

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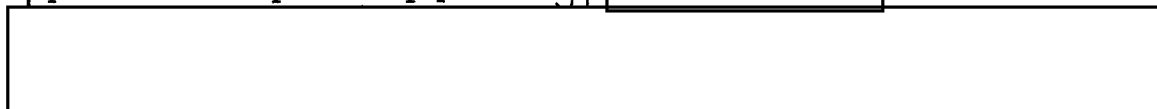
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UK-USSR: Negotiations which may lead to a break in Western restrictions on the sale of large-diameter pipe to the USSR are being continued by a British firm in Moscow. There is no indication that the British Government will retreat from its position that it has no legal authority to stop shipments. The government of Japan, which as a non-member of NATO did not participate in the "embargo" decision, indicates it expects extreme pressure to permit resumption of pipe sales.

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